

CIA in South Vietnam Upheld by Kennedy

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By the Associated Press

Washington — President Kennedy says speculation that the Central Intelligence Agency has bucked administration policy in South Vietnam is "wholly untrue" and does the CIA an injustice.

At his first news conference in nearly five weeks, Mr. Kennedy also confirmed Wednesday that John Richardson has been transferred from his old post as chief of the CIA mission in South Vietnam. He called Mr. Richardson "a very dedicated public servant" and gave no reason for the transfer nor said where Mr. Richardson would serve.

The early-evening session with 258 reporters also produced among other things:

- A Kennedy statement that he thinks Sen. Barry Goldwater of Arizona can capture the 1964 Republican presidential nomination—if he passes a pre-convention test of "his endurance and his perseverance and his agility."
- A disclosure by Mr. Kennedy that the Soviet Union has made no response to his Sept. 20 proposal that this country and the Soviets mount a joint expedition to put a man on the moon by 1970. Mr. Kennedy said the subject might come up at a late-afternoon conference with Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei A. Gromyko Thursday.
- An assertion that it would be "a great mistake" to reduce the 40-hour work week.
- A statement that the administration is watchfully concerned about recent price increases in steel, aluminum,

heavy chemicals, and electrical equipment.

Mr. Kennedy was asked to discuss reports that the CIA played an independent role in South Vietnam and clashed with Pentagon and State Department policies. He said this was "wholly untrue" and unfair.

The President said he studied the record of the past nine months and found nothing to indicate that CIA "has done anything but support policy."

At another point, however, Mr. Kennedy conceded officials have differed about policy in South Vietnam. But now, he said, "I know of no disagreement . . . on what our basic policies will be and what steps we will take to implement it."

Mr. Kennedy also talked at length about domestic politics. He got started when asked if he expected Senator Goldwater to be the GOP presidential candidate next year. He replied: "I think he can do it. I think it is possible for him to do it. But he has a long road to go."

While declining to announce his candidacy, Mr. Kennedy said he expects "a hard, close fight in 1964." And he expressed hope that voters will conclude at election time "that the economy is moving ahead . . . that we are substantially stronger militarily, that the chances of war have been reduced over Berlin and perhaps in other areas."

But he said it would be premature for him to make such claims this far in advance of the balloting.